

**Pwyllgor Diwylliant, Cyfathrebu, y Gymraeg,
Chwaraeon, a Chysylltiadau Rhyngwladol**

**Culture, Communications, Welsh Language,
Sport, and International Relations Committee**

Mark Drakeford MS
First Minister
and
Vaughan Gething MS
Minister for Economy

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Dyddiad | Date: 14 July 2022

Pwnc | Subject: Preparations for the FIFA World Cup Finals

Dear Mark and Vaughan,

The Committee wrote to the First Minister on 17 June to ask him to set out the work which the Welsh Government will be undertaking to capitalise on the opportunities afforded by the fact that the Wales men's football team has qualified for the 2022 FIFA World Cup Finals in Qatar.

Since that letter the First Minister attended the Culture, Communications, Welsh Language, Sport and International Relations Committee meeting on 23 June to discuss this topic further. In answer to my question as to what the Welsh Government is doing to maximise the economic and cultural benefits of this opportunity, he said he is developing an approach similar to that taken for the Rugby World Cup in Japan in 2019. This included taking a trade delegation to Tokyo, described as:

'an approach that marshals resources across the whole of the Welsh Government, but then seeks to work with key partners.'

The First Minister told the Committee that he had held a meeting of senior officials across the Government 'to capture all the contributions of different facets of the Welsh Government's work', which we welcomed. I note that he also said that he intended to Chair a meeting of Ministers and to appoint a Minister to lead the day-to-day activity to 'prepare for the World Cup and then to make sure that we're doing that with our partners'.

Following the Committee meeting, via email correspondence, I asked for an update of the outcomes of these meetings. The First Minister's private office told us that:

'The meetings that are currently taking place are to discuss potential options, rather than agree specific work.

It may be better for the FM to provide an update on the World Cup in September when plans have firmed up more and further information is available.'

We considered this at our meeting on 6 July and agreed that this work needs to be urgently prioritised if the Welsh Government is to make the most of the global stage provided by the FIFA World Cup Finals.

We believe that this would mean agreeing specific objectives and priorities before the end of July and implementing the necessary actions as soon as possible to ensure Wales fully realises the potential of the opportunities provided through a Team Cymru approach. The Football Association of Wales (FAW) should not be expected to play this role alone.

We believe the Welsh Government should allocate the necessary resources to ensure this potential is maximised. This includes appointing experts who can work with experienced civil servants and partners, including the FAW, to concentrate on delivering this important project.

We would be grateful for an update on what has been put in place, including the resource allocated as well as any discussions and dialogue that have taken place with the UK Government and the British Council. Owing to the urgency of these opportunities, we would be grateful to receive this information by the end of this month. We fear that unless the urgency of this work is increased substantially, then the government may miss the opportunity to promote our culture, and attract investment and interest in our economy, as well as benefit the people of Wales, on the most prominent stage for a generation.

Yours sincerely,



Delyth Jewell MS

Chair

Culture, Communications, Welsh Language, Sport, and International Relations Committee